

# IOWA BIRD LIFE

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE  
IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

EDITED BY FRED J. PIERCE



Volumes XXVI-XXX

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(A COMPLETE INDEX WILL BE FOUND  
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EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION OFFICE  
WINTHROP, IOWA

Entered as second-class matter February 9, 1932, at the post office at Winthrop,  
Iowa, under the Act of March 3, 1879.



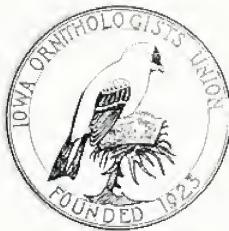
# IOWA BIRD LIFE

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VOL. XXVI

MARCH, 1956

NO. 1



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The Iowa Ornithologists' Union was organized at Ames, Iowa, February 28, 1923, for the study and protection of native birds and to promote fraternal relations among Iowa bird students.

The central design of the Union's official seal is the Eastern Goldfinch, designated State Bird of Iowa in 1933.

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## IN DEFENSE OF BIRD-WATCHERS

By JEANETTE GRAHAM

2720 Ripley Street  
DAVENPORT, IOWA

All over the United States, Canada, Mexico, and South America, trained observers sit in the dark night, straining their eyes through their telescopes, tensely awaiting the object of their vigil. Let us join one of the groups stationed on the bluffs of the upper Mississippi. The hour is late; the wind is stilled; the animals, birds, and insects are quieted for their pre-dawn rest. The man at the telescope utters the word: "Bird!" A light flashes on near him, and he continues: "one-half Tycho, in at five, out at one, one second, passerine, distinct image."

"Right," comes the terse answer, and the light is out again. During the brief interval of light, we were able to observe a man sitting at a telescope which was pointing toward the full moon. Near him sat a woman with pencil, paper, stop-watch, and flashlight. Around these two were other trained observers who, at 20-minute intervals, would take their places at the telescope and recording position.

These individuals are collaborating with the University of Louisiana in an intense and scientific study on bird migration by observing the full moon during the months of spring and fall migration, and by taking careful notes on their observations. They are ardent bird-lovers, motivated in this strange experiment by some of the unique forces at work only in bird-watchers. Even birders have some of the normal responses to lack of sleep and staring at the moon, however, and must continually remind themselves of their sacrifice for the sake of science as moons dance before their eyes for days afterwards.

Birders are usually considered just a little mad; they are laughed at by the public, teased in private, and ridiculed in the cartoons. If a birder is forced into an admission of his hobby, the normal response follows this sequence: a slight withdrawal, the noble attempt to smuggle a laugh, a sudden exit—with or without an excuse. Perhaps with a little understanding of bird-watchers and their ways, the other members of society could at least keep their eyebrows lowered physically when someone admits that he watches birds! To introduce some birders and present some of their ways is my purpose here. However, since I make a few pretenses of being an amateur birder myself, I do not guarantee complete objectivity.

There is often some confusion between bird-watchers and ornithologists. The difference is in degree. A bird-watcher would be one who, in some active way, would show his interest in birds and their habits. This might involve joining a local or national organization devoted to the study and conservation of birds, or it might involve building and setting up a feeding station to attract birds to a particular vicinity, or some other related activity.

An ornithologist is usually classified as a "professional" birder. The word professional in most circles would infer one who makes money for his duties, but there are so few possibilities for remuneration from watching birds, that in bird circles the word professional implies one who has learned the scientific names for most species, has learned to skin and stuff birds, or one who has made a scientific study of a life-history of a species. These advanced bird students consider themselves ornithologists, and usually have a slightly superior attitude toward the amateurs, while the amateurs merely tolerate the professional—this attitude a result of the professionals having made bird study "too scientific"—if you listen to the amateurs.

Since most birders join a local or national organization in order to help them further their interest, and, being fairly normal social creatures at this stage, in order to meet others interested in this hobby, let us examine what happens upon affiliation with a local group. It is at this point that one ceases to be normal. There is one good reason for this. The newcomer meets people who are ardent birders, and soon finds himself imitating them. He starts gazing at the sky as he walks down the street, carefully looks at each tree he passes for any signs of bird life, stops short at any bird song, and continually mumbles to himself as he memorizes the order in which the birds are presented in the new bird book he continually carries under his arm. Every club has numerous field trips during the year, and the newcomer is always known by his dress. He wears too many clothes or not enough, dresses for path-walking when rail-hunting in a marsh is on the program, and—if it is a she—wears a skirt when the route will be through innumerable fields of poison ivy.

After this individual has endured the rigors of watching birds for about a year, he gets past the newcomer stage, and, like the sophomore in high school or college who has been through it all once, thinks there is little more to be learned. Our birder can now be recognized on a field trip by shiny binoculars of which he is extremely proud, a general argumentative attitude when questions of identification arise, and a slightly-used bird book in the hip pocket (if to be seen at all). He will be dressed for any occasion or circumstance—this through hard experience.

At least one advanced birder is to be found in every group. He has been humbled in the past by those with more knowledge than he possessed, and so is sympathetic with underlings; he is very jealous of his long life-list of birds seen, and is firmly convinced that if anyone else in the area has a longer one, it is through some mis-identification or mis-representation. He is known by his position in relation to the rest of the party: he is either charging ahead to make sure that no one else sees a bird before he does, or lagging behind to triple-check that Black-billed Cuckoo to make sure that it isn't a Yellow-billed one. These two desires—to go fast and yet stay behind to double-check—sometimes have frustrating results.

If the advanced birder is sometimes frustrated, the newcomer is sometimes in a state of advanced neurosis after listening to some of the terms encountered on an average hike. Some common terms are: "10:00 in that elm" speaking of a bird just above left center of the tree, or "no golden slippers visible" when looking at an egret and trying to determine whether it is a common or snowy one, or "those are Goldfinch undulations," explaining the pattern of a Goldfinch's flight. These terms continually slip into the banter of veteran birders while the newcomer feels as if he's going down for the third time.

There are two main field trips during the year in which every self-respecting local club participates. The first of these occurs in May, the most exciting time of the year in the bird world, and therefore the most intriguing period for birders. This is the May "Big Day Count" or a local variation, a "Dawn Bird Concert." Either of these consists of meeting at dawn on a specific May morning for a hike to list all the available species—whether migrants or residents. Dawn is usually about 4 a.m. during this month, which means that one must rouse oneself at 3 a.m.—a rather shocking experience the first year. The sunrise is worth the extra effort, except for the fact that it is almost invariably cloudy on these mornings. These facts do not daunt a true enthusiast, however.

The second main field trip takes place between Christmas and New Year's Day. This is the Annual Christmas Bird Census. Everyone who possibly can, hikes from dawn to dusk, taking careful notes on numbers and

types of birds seen, and then spends all evening thawing out—a painful, but rewarding experience, if you have the bird-bug.

Field trips get birders into considerable trouble. Even though most birders are quite conscientious about getting permission for trespassing, there are a few inevitable clashes with the law. I would guess that more birders get questioned by law-enforcement officers each year than do fishermen. And birders don't even have to buy licenses! A case in point: two of our more ardent enthusiasts arose early one spring morning to go to the city airport to hunt for Horned Larks' nests. While they were diligently walking back and forth across the airfield in the early morning light, the sheriff arrived on the scene demanding explanation and identification. Some neighbors had become suspicious of their innocent quest for Horned Larks' nests! And then there was our friend who dressed himself in a sheet and danced with the egrets to study them at close range.

The fortunate thing about this ornithology business is that you can go out at any time of the day or night at any season of the year and do many strange things—with a good excuse always handy. However, if at any time you would decide to give up bird-watching, it's a very simple thing to do. Your binoculars are easily sold; the bird book easily burned. That's all there is to it, period—until you hear the next bird sing or see the next Cardinal in your evergreens.

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## THE DECORAH REGION AND THE VALLEY OF THE ONEOTA

By ARTHUR J. PALAS  
POSTVILLE, IOWA

When any annual meeting of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union is announced, three questions immediately arise in our minds. First, we wonder what the program will be. When the meeting is not to be held in one of our larger cities, we wish to know about accommodations and facilities that may be available. When it is a place where a meeting of the IOU has not been held before, we like to be informed as to what the area offers for field trips to see birds. In meeting in Decorah this year, we find all three of these essentials in excellent supply.

Good motel and hotel accommodations are available. Two morning field trips are being planned. As all will wish to join in both of these trips, many will arrive Friday evening. Winneshiek Hotel is as fine a hostelry as can be found in a city the size of Decorah. Decorah Motel, located at the junction of Highways 9 and 52 on the southwest edge of the city, has many rooms and fine appointments. There are other good hotels and motels in the city.

Luther College has generously offered to open its facilities for our accommodations for the meetings and banquet on Saturday. The college has a beautiful campus. Its Main Building is situated on the edge of a bluff, a most beautiful site. From this building you have a panoramic view from the north and east to the south overlooking the city and hills in the distance. From the south and west to the north you overlook the Upper Iowa River valley.

On all sides of Decorah and up and down the valley is abundant timber and other topography suitable for bird life. If we have the average season we shall see Cliff Swallows nesting under a bridge within the city, and we should see them nesting on the cliffs near Bluffton. The Interstate Power Company has two dam sites down the river, 6 and 16 miles distant.

There are swamps near both dams. The one at the lower dam covers over 100 acres. The Iowa Conservation Commission has recently acquired Cardinal Swamp, located about 18 miles west of Decorah and west of Ridgeway, south of the Turkey River. There also is a swamp area about 12 miles northwest of Decorah on the east edge of the scenic Bluffton region. An attempt has been made to drain this Bluffton swamp, but the draining has been only partially successful as the swamp is sustained by numerous small springs. These swamp areas offer good opportunity to view water and shore-birds. We may not be so lucky as to see the Woodcock, that originator of stunt flights, but we will be in territory where this bird formerly gave his nuptial song and flight performances for the benefit of his beloved. Though we may miss him, other shore-birds will be there.

The three requirements for a successful meeting which have been mentioned do not encompass all the satisfaction you will get from this Decorah meeting.

Decorah is located in the unglaciated area of northeast Iowa. Niagara Cave, near Harmony, Minnesota, is entered from the State of Minnesota, but most of its passages are under the surface of Iowa. In Spook Cave, west of McGregor, people go boating on underground waters. Caves and underground streams abound here. Sink-holes, caverns and large springs are found from the Minnesota line and southeasterly to the southern border of Clayton County. Decorah is located in the most scenic spot of this area.

The large springs situated near Decorah must be mentioned. Twin Springs, beside the State Fish Hatchery, are located just west of the city; Siewers (seevers) Springs just south of the city; and Dunning Springs just north and east of the city. Dunning Springs consist of a stream of water issuing from the base of a cliff near the famous Decorah Ice Cave.

In and about Decorah and up and down the stream are stands of native white pine. In the Bluffton region is a forest of native balsam fir, the only native stand of balsam fir within the state and reported to be one of the most southerly native stands of this tree on the North American continent.



UPPER IOWA RIVER NEAR THE TWIN BRIDGES  
Photograph by Bruce Goetsch.

Up and down the river valley are shelf-rocks, high up on cliffs, jutting beyond the underlying rocks of a softer texture or of a material more prone to disintegrate. The columnar formation of the cliffs at Palisades Park immediately below Decorah and especially the palisades near Bluffton have been declared to be the equal in beauty to the Palisades of the Hudson. Chimney Rock, a little above Bluffton, is reputed to be over 100 feet high. It stands as high as the bluff close to it. During a stiff breeze there is a noticeable movement of the crown of the rock. Some scientist with a sextant should compute its height.

Water and wind have carved marvelous beauty in the Decorah region. Here Nature was lavish. Here she "opened the book".



PALISADES ON THE UPPER IOWA RIVER NEAR BLUFFTON

Photograph by S. W. Lock. Reprinted from "Iowa Conservationist," June, 1949, courtesy of Iowa Conservation Commission.

During the early settlement by white man the Upper Iowa River was more generally known as the Oneota River. A legislator sought to make the name official but his proposed legislation was not accepted. Presumably, other legislators thought more of the beautiful name of "Iowa" than the equally poetic Indian name of "Oneota." Or, did they believe that by having the name of the state attached to it, its beauty was more nearly assured as a part of the whole state rather than just northeast Iowa? If the latter was the motivating thought of those who wanted to avoid the name of "Oneota," did they not defeat their own purposes? As this is one of the beauty spots of the Midwest and is certain to be known as such, would not a purely Indian name of the river be more suited than a name that only refers to one part of one state?

What I have tried to say is that you cannot afford to miss the 1956 annual meeting of the IOU. Come while the roads are not congested. When it becomes more nationally known, Decorah is likely to become a Mecca for tourists.

And as for birds, we may not see the Bald Eagle or the Osprey, or not even the Turkey Vulture, but in proper season and weather these three birds are often observed here. The cliffs are inviting. They draw these soaring birds. As on a warm day in June we enjoy lolling in a hammock, so, on such a day the buzzard, high over the edge of a cliff, with wings extended, swaying back and forth in an up-current of air, enjoys his siesta in a substance far softer than the softest hammock ever made.

## SPRING CONVENTION TO BE HELD AT DECORAH, MAY 19 AND 20

The annual meeting of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union will be held at Decorah, Iowa, Saturday and Sunday, May 19 and 20. Committees are working on details of the program and the meeting promises to be one of the best in our history. Two field trips are planned, to occupy Saturday and Sunday forenoons. Those who will wish to participate in the Saturday morning trip will probably arrange to come to Decorah the evening before, unless they are within easy driving distance.

The meeting will be held at Luther College, with registration during Saturday forenoon. There will be an indoor program on Saturday afternoon, highlighted by several speakers who will discuss topics of especial interest, followed by the business meeting. The annual Ornithologists' Banquet will be Saturday evening.

Luther College is situated in a beautifully wooded campus on the bluffs overlooking the Upper Iowa River at the northwest edge of Decorah, a city of 6,000 and the county seat of Winneshiek County. The city was named after the Indian chief, Waukon-Decorah, and was settled in the 1840's. The Indian name for the river that winds through the city is Oneota. Through the ages the river cut out beautiful palisades both below and above the city.

Decorah lies in the "driftless" or unglaciated part of Iowa and the surrounding territory is characterized by precipitous limestone cliffs, numerous caves and clear, cold springs. This is the "trout-stream" country of Iowa, and its small streams are inhabited by brown, brook and rainbow trout. Watercress fills the shallow eddies and leeks grow in the moist ravine bottoms.

The last recorded nesting of the Bald Eagle in Iowa was on Elephant Butte northeast of Decorah. The Pileated Woodpecker is common in this vicinity, as is the Yellow-breasted Chat. With our meeting in the northern part of the state, it is hoped that this third week-end in the month will catch the warbler migration at its peak.



MAIN BUILDING OF LUTHER COLLEGE

The native people of this region are primarily of Norwegian ancestry and their culture and traditions are still in evidence. It may be that you can still try their home-made "Lefsa." Should this introduction to Decorah sound colored, bear in mind that it was written by a native.

This should prove to be a wonderful two-day vacation for all Iowa bird students, so make your plans to meet with us at Decorah on May 19 and 20. The completed program and further information will be sent to all members well in advance of the meeting.—BRUCE F. STILES.

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## TEEN-AGE EXPERIENCES WITH BIRDS

By WILLIAM YOUNGWORTH

3119 East Second St.  
SIOUX CITY, IOWA

The summer that I turned 12 was one never to be forgotten, for that year genial John Wallace, the railroad surveyor, again put me on his payroll and this time we headed west and north in South Dakota. We traveled in style, and rode in the pullman car and took our meals in the diner. Mr. Wallace told me to order up, as we were on the railroad expense account and were expected to eat well. The luscious strawberry shortcake, which I ordered at every chance, still lingers in my memory.

Several busy days were spent in the lumber yard at my home, Tyndall, cutting up lumber for stakes and sharpening them. These were to be used in marking the corners of the lots we surveyed. Our first trip on the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul railroad took us to the town of Murdo. At this time the sign on the depot still honored the old pioneer with his full name, Murdo Mackenzie. There was a large, open pasture on the south edge of the town and it was here that we started operations. Mr. Wallace laid out this area in city lots and I helped as rodman and drove the wooden stakes as directed. Since he was the railroad surveyor, he worked up his own street names. He suggested that I had been working so faithfully there

was no reason why one street should not bear my name. So on the acreage plat one street was named Youngworth Street. The birds which I found on that area were Meadowlarks, Horned Larks and Lark Buntings.

After this sub-division had been finished, we returned to Tyndall and went through much the same process of preparation for a more extended trip. This time Mr. Wallace said we were actually going out into the wide-open prairie and advised me to take extra clothing, as we would be a long way from any town. Our destination would be Maple Leaf on the Cannon Ball Line. This branch line of the Milwaukee railroad takes off from McLaughlin, Corson County, and runs on up into North Dakota, crossing the Cannon Ball River near Shields.

The station agent at McLaughlin was expecting us. He had a section foreman bring around a handcar and flatcar for our equipment. As a boy of 12 I quickly took a very dim view of that handcar, for it was operated by two handles which were pumped up and down. So not to be in the way if called upon to help pump, I moved back on the trailing flat car. After what seemed an age, as we were going up-grade, we finally espied a lone little station and we soon arrived at Maple Leaf. It was just a forlorn station, nothing more, amid endless seas of rolling hills and short prairie grass. We unloaded, the handcar went off up the track, and I soon experienced one of my greatest boyish thrills in bird work.

I walked into the deserted station building. As I did so a brownish bird dashed by my face, making querimonious calls. Up above a wrecked window casing was a nest. After looking at the birds, I decided without much hesitation that I had seen my first Say's Phoebes and found their nest. Our plans had been to camp in the station-house and take meals with a rancher, but vandals had about wrecked the building and Mr. Wallace decided to look for lodging elsewhere. Secretly I was glad, because my phoebes would not be disturbed.

We obtained lodging at a ranch-house which was quite distant from the railroad. The rancher agreed to cart us over in the morning and we carried our lunch. In the evening we walked back to the ranch. It was then that I really got to know the birds of the prairie. Sharp-tailed Grouse and Prairie Chickens were seen often. The lovely whistle of the Upland Plover was fine music to one's ear on the lonely prairie. Meadowlarks, Horned Larks, Lark Buntings, Chestnut-collared Longspurs, and Savannah Sparrows were everywhere. Around the ranch buildings were Brewer's Blackbirds, Killdeers, and numerous Barn Swallows.

One trivial point should be mentioned here. In prairie country firewood is hard to obtain, and this fact helped in my bird study.

Mr. Wallace knew the right-of-way along the Cannon Ball Line had been staked 200 feet from the track. Stout wooden stakes had been driven at regular intervals, but to find one of those stakes after our arrival was a little difficult. We walked both sides of the track for an entire day and didn't find a stake. During the walks, however, I was studying prairie bird life and enjoying it. The next day we continued our search. Fortunately for Mr. Wallace I stumbled over one hidden stake. His praise was high, as he told me we would have had to find a section marker and then practically re-survey the right-of-way to establish his starting point for the acreage plat.

The days were long and hot, as we measured the townsite and staked out six blocks. The nearest drinking water was at a small farm house west of the tracks; we made several trips there during the day. The lady at the house was very generous and would set out a pitcher of lemonade for us. As we got better acquainted she joked with Mr. Wallace about changing the name of the new town from Maple Leaf to her family name of Kukuk. They were the only family living anywhere within sight of the railroad.



SCENES IN THE CASPER MOUNTAINS, WYOMING

Upper left: An early snow (note the person standing knee-deep at edge of picture).

Lower left: Aspen grove in the mountains.

Upper right: A view from near the Hoskins cabin.

Middle right: The Emily Hoskins cabin partly hidden in a grove.

Lower right: The youthful Youngworth pitching horse shoes.

Mr. Wallace said that he would and he was true to his word. The Acreage Plat was titled Kukuk, Corson County, South Dakota, and signed John W. Wallace, Deputy State Surveyor, South Dakota.

Near the end of my twelfth year, our family moved from Tyndall, South Dakota, to Sioux City, Iowa, which has been my home ever since. Two people who gave me encouragement to study birds were now to come into my life. The first was Miss Alice Blake, biology teacher at Central High School. She thought enough of my ability to appoint me as a kind of student assistant; if I had a spare period, she would have me set up the material for biology laboratory classes. Upon graduating from high school and matriculating at Morningside College, the second and greatest influence in my life was Dr. Thomas Calderwood Stephens, professor of zoology. Although our friendship was firm and steadfast and we were on many field trips together, we never reached a state of jocund familiarity. He always called me Youngworth, never using my first name. Because of my deep and profound respect for his fine man, I always addressed him as Doctor, an appellation I knew he justly deserved. It wasn't until the last year of his life that he began to call me Bill; perhaps Youngworth was then too long to pronounce.

The bird work of my teens resolved into a serious endeavor in the summer of 1923. I had finished high school in mid-year and in June was offered the chance of going to Wyoming to live on a homestead in the mountains. Two homesteads which adjoined were being proved on by Mrs. Emily Hoskins and Mr. and Mrs. Cedric Hoskins. I lived there that summer and again in 1925. These homesteads were not the barren, sun-baked acres that one might think of as west of the Missouri River in South Dakota or in the Nebraska sandhills. They were actually timbered areas high in the Casper Mountains, an extension of the Laramie Range.

The Hoskins log cabin was beautifully placed near a large spring which formed the headwaters of Garden Creek. It was surrounded by lodgepole pine and blue spruce trees. Near by were groves of aspen trees, some of which were very large. The altitude was approximately 8,000 ft. mainly Canadian in life zone, but also a border line of Transition. Bird life in mountain areas can be extremely disappointing to the bird watcher who is accustomed to finding many species of birds in numbers in timbered lowland situations. He will find that at the end of the summer his mountain bird life from a given small mountain area has been quite small. The few species I found that summer gave me all the more pleasure.

In aspen groves where some of the trees were 50 feet tall the nesting birds were Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers and several pairs of Violet-green Swallows. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were also seen in this area, but I never determined whether they were nesting. Other summer birds of the cabin area were Western Tanagers, Chestnut-backed Bluebirds, Mountain Bluebirds, Mourning Doves, Robins, Warbling Vireos, Red-shafted Flickers, Purple Finches, and Black-capped Chickadees. Birds seen at other spots were Rocky Mountain Jays, Pinon Jays, Sparrow Hawks, Arkansas Kingbirds, Pine Siskins, Clark Nutcrackers, Crows, Turkey Vultures, and Red-tailed Hawks. The loud call of the Olive-sided Flycatcher could be heard at any time of day back of the cabin. Blue Grouse were common and often roosted in the spruce trees north of the storehouse. Down in Garden Creek Canyon the Water Ouzel could always be found, and overhead a Goshawk was often seen. Ruby-crowned Kinglets sang their lovely song from the treetops. Down below I would flush nesting White-crowned Sparrows and Juncos; the latter looked like the Gray-headed variety. Audubon's Warblers were occasionally seen. Out on the open sage areas of the mountain I found Sage Hens, Nighthawks, and sometimes saw a Golden Eagle go sailing

by. The common bird of the night was the Great Horned Owl, which was also flushed in daytime near old abandoned mine shafts. I had a pleasant surprise one day, when I ducked under a low-hanging pine branch and flushed a hummingbird from its nest. The nest contained two eggs. From the low situation in which it was placed, I decided it must be that of the Broad-tailed Hummingbird, which is the only common nesting hummer in those mountains.

## THE 1955 CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS IN IOWA

Compiled by FRED J. PIERCE

Previous records were broken in the 1955 Iowa Christmas census, with a total of 90 species reported. Censuses came from 21 stations, and no less than 159 observers participated (about equal to one-half of our entire Iowa membership though all were not members). Davenport had the all-time high of 72 species, of which a large number were ducks and other birds not driven south by the unusually cold months of November and December. In spite of cold weather, many birds (Robins, for example) decided to winter in Iowa. Although many observers reported that birds were scarce and difficult to find, the composite list runs up to a high total.

The tabulation of winter bird life makes interesting reading—especially so when it is compared with the statistics of previous years. Of the rather scarce birds, 22 species were reported from one station only, while 14 species were found at two different stations. Only eight species appear on all the lists. They are: Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Crow, Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Starling, and Slate-colored Junco.

Data on place, time, weather and the observers who reported in the 1955 census are given below. Included are additional notes on the unusual species marked by the asterisk in the tables.

1. BACKBONE STATE PARK (Delaware County). Dec. 26; 8:30 a. m. to 3:30 p. m. Semi-cloudy till noon, then clear; temp. 32° at start, 38° at return; light NE wind; 3 in. crusted snow in sheltered areas in woods, elsewhere ground mostly bare; Maquoketa River partly open; 3 miles on foot, 50 by car; trip included an auto ride from Winthrop to the park and return by a different route, with side trips on various roads; roadside list included in the census. Observers together: Earl Freeman, Paul Pierce, F. J. Pierce.

2. CEDAR FALLS (Snag Creek, Union Bridge, Josh Higgins Park, Hartman Reserve, Black Hawk Creek; river-bottom forest 50%, upland forest 15%, savannas 10%, fields and prairies 25%). Jan. 2; 8 a. m. to 12, 1 to 5 p. m. Cloudy; temp. 30°-36°; no wind; up to 6 in. snow in protected areas on ground; ponds frozen, rivers and creeks partly open; total hours, 6 on foot, 2 by car; total miles, 17 on foot, 47 by car. Four field observers in one party, with three others watching separate feeding stations. Martin L. Grant, Russell Hays, Ruth Mahon, Jean Martin, Eleanor O'Connell, Betty Reninger, Beulah Rugg.

3. CEDAR RAPIDS (Manhattan, Ellis and Bever Parks, Cedar Lake and Cedar River in city, outlying areas and Fairfax vicinity). Jan. 2; 8 a. m. to 5 p. m. Cloudy; temp. 34°-36°; light NW wind; 4 miles on foot, 35 by car. Larry Atherton, Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Atherton, Lillian Serbousek, Dr. and Mrs. Robert Vane, Myra Willis.

4. DAVENPORT (7½-mile radius with Memorial Bridge as center). Dec. 26; 4 a. m. to 5:30 p. m. Overcast in morning, clearing in afternoon; temp. 31° to 37°; wind E-NE, 6-10 m.p.h.; ground bare; river 20% open; total party-hours, 57 on foot, 33 by car, 8 miscellaneous; total party-miles, 64 on foot, 320 by car. Observers (41) in 18 parties. Albert Baily, Lang

Baily, Lewis Blevins, Harry Carl, Dorothy Cowley, Dale Dickinson, Leo Dowring, Clark Ehlers, David Fawks, Elton Fawks, Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Gold, Mrs. Henry Goldschmidt, Ivan Graham, Jeanette Graham, Richard Greer, Ted Greer, H. James Hodges, Ben Holm, Frances Johnson, Marion Johnson, Fred Kent, Tom Kent, Dr. and Mrs. J. P. Leonard, Ed Lewis, Jim Lewis, Jerry McConoughy, Mrs. Alice Mattson, Edwin Meyer, Thomas Morrissey, Peter Petersen, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Pete C. Petersen, Sr., Mr. and Mrs. Don Price, Dennis Sheets, Don Swensson, Ron Swensson, Robert Trial, Bengt Von Rosen.

Two Ospreys seen by Dale Dickinson and Ivan Graham, observed in flight and extremely light underparts and black mask noted. Two Catbirds seen by the same observers, close observation for considerable time. Two Cowbirds observed by Elton Fawks, Richard and Ted Greer, in sufficient light to show relative sizes of Red-wings, English Sparrows and the Cowbirds in a large tree; observers walked around tree several times, and examined birds from just underneath and farther away; used 8- and 6-power glasses and 20-power 'scope; noted brownish heads and unstreaked breasts. Savannah Sparrow seen by H. J. Hodges, observed at very close range in good light, described in full detail at compilation meeting held after the census trip.

5. DES MOINES (Walnut Woods State Park, Waterworks Park, Impounding Reservoir, Pine Hill Cemetery, Fisher's Lake, Sycamore Park, Dove Woods, 28th St. woods, Smouse Woods, Crocker Woods, Wakonsa Woods, Gray's Lake, Glendale Cemetery; deciduous woodland 60%, open fields 25%, water and riverside 10%, coniferous woodland 5%). Dec. 26; 8 a. m. to 5 p. m. Partly cloudy to clear; temp. 31° to 46°; wind E, 12-15 m.p.h.; ground bare; cold weather previous to census left very little open water. Total party-hours, 21 on foot, 14 by car; total party-miles, 25 on foot, 127 by car. Observers (25) in five parties. Ben Aurand, A. C. Berkowitz, Julie Bowlby, Mrs. Dwight Brooke, Carl Brown, Woodward Brown, Ruth Chapman, Philip Clampitt, Oliver Graves, Mr. and Mrs. Lester Haskell, Joe Kennedy, Gary Kline, John Kline, Dr. E. L. Kozicky, Olivia McCabe, Mrs. Newton Moats, Dr. and Mrs. H. R. Peasley, Mary E. Peck, Mrs. Tom Pettit, Dr. Oscar Richter, Bruce Stiles, Mrs. Toni Wendelburg, Lynn Willcockson.

6. DUBUQUE (Linwood and Mt. Calvary cemeteries, Eagle Point Park, Mississippi River sloughs and Sinope Creek area in Wisconsin; open fields 10%, coniferous woodlands 15%, deciduous woodlands 40%, river sloughs 35%). Dec. 26; 7:30 a. m. to 4 p. m. Cloudy, then clearing; temp. 25° to 32°; wind N, 3-7 m.p.h.; 2 in. fresh snow over patches of old; river only open in patches below dam, a total of 10 acres. Total party-hours, 7½ on foot, 1 by car; total party-miles, 8 on foot, 6 by car. Observers (6) in one party. Mr. and Mrs. George Crossley, Beverley Datisman, Edward Heuser, Clifford Johnson, Ival Schuster.

7. DYERSVILLE (trip afoot from city to Benn's woodlot 1 mile north; city 5%, cornfield 7%, weed and willow-fringed creek 20%, pasture and meadow 50%, floodplain woodlot with scattered undergrowth 18%). Jan. 1; 2:30 to 4 p. m. Overcast; temp. 37°; moderate E wind. Observers together. Mr. and Mrs. Emmett Polder.

8. FAIRFIELD (Waterworks and Old Settlers Park, Evergreen Cemetery, wooded area south of Golf Club, Walton Lake, general farm areas SE and NW of city). Dec. 26; 9 a. m. to 5 p. m. Overcast at start, clearing by noon; temp. 35° to 45°; wind rising during day; ground bare. Observers in two parties. Mr. and Mrs. Ben Taylor, Mr. and Mrs. James S. Taylor.

9. FORT DEFIANCE STATE PARK (Emmet County). Jan. 4; 9 a. m. to 4 p. m. Clear; temp. 18° at start, 32° at return, 40° at noon; wind 10 m.p.h.; 4 in. old snow on ground except in plowed fields; water areas frozen over; 4 miles on foot, car trip to lake areas. M. L. Jones.

1. Herring Gull	1	Double-crested Cormorant	1	21. Woodward
2. Cedar Waxwings	2	Great Blue Heron	2	
3. Cedar Kestrels	3	Mallard	800	20. Webster City
4. Davenport	4	Black Duck	8	19. Sweet Marsh
5. Des Moines	5	Baldpate	1	18. Sioux City
6. Dubuque	6	Wood Duck	2	17. Shenandoah
7. Davenport	7	Ring-necked Duck	7	16. Pine Hollow State Park
8. Fairfield	8	Canvas-back	3	15. Ottumwa
9. Pella, DeGraffence State Park	9	Lesser Scaup	44	14. Mount Vernon
10. Grundy Center	10	American Goldeneye	18	13. Lamoni
11. Harpers Ferry	11	Buff-head	820	12. Iowa City
12. Grundy Center	12	Ruddy Duck	1	11. Hartman Ferry
13. Laramie	13	Hooded Merganser	1	10. Pella, DeGraffence State Park
14. Mount Vernon	14	American Merganser	3	9. Pella, DeGraffence State Park
15. Ottumwa	15	Red-breasted Merganser	111	8. Fairfield
16. Pine Hollow State Park	16	Sharp-shinned Hawk	2	7. Davenport
17. Shenandoah	17	Cooper's Hawk	1	6. Dubuque
18. Sioux City	18	Red-tailed Hawk	2	5. Cedar Rapids
19. Sweet Marsh	19	Red-shouldered Hawk	12	4. Davenport
20. Webster City	20	Rough-legged Hawk	5	3. Cedar Falls
21. Woodward	21	Bald Eagle	3	2. Cedar Falls
		Mash Hawk	17	1. Black-bellied Plover
		Osprey	2	
		Sparrow Hawk	8	
		Bob-white	55	
		Ring-necked Pheasant	32	
		American Coot	4	
		Killdeer	5	
		Herring Gull	670	
		Ring-billed Gull	18	
		Mourning Dove	4	
		Barn Owl	51	
		Serow Owl	1	
		Great Horned Owl	1	
		Barred Owl	8	
		Long-eared Owl	2	
		Short-eared Owl	1	
		Saw-whet Owl	1	
		Belted Kingfisher	2	
		Flicker (Yellow-shafted)	3	
		Pileated Woodpecker	2	
		Red-bellied Woodpecker	5	
		Red-headed Woodpecker	12	
		Barry Woodpecker	3	
		Downy Woodpecker	7	
		Horned Lark	12	
		Blue Jay	10	

## CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS IN IOWA

15

	1. Cedar Rapids	2. Des Moines	3. Davenport	4. Dubuque	5. Dyersville	6. Fairfield	7. Pocatello	8. State Park	9. Grundy Center	10. Harrisburg	11. Iowa City	12. Lamont	13. Mount Vernon	14. Ottumwa	15. Pine Hollow	16. Shennandoah	17. Sioux City	18. Sweet Marsh	19. Webster City	20. Woodward	21. Woodbury City
Crow	116	54	56	639	116	7	5	11	11	8	32	50	9	12	25	16	275	3500	92	26	45
Chickadee	8	112	53	383	20	3	21	14	31	236	57	49	14	47	3	62	46	35	25	25	13
Tufted Titmouse	11	7	228	66	4	2	1	1	1	3	24	6	6	14	2	17	9	38	30	10	14
White-breasted Nuthatch	60	8	133	102	9	1	5	5	5	7	41	11	4	14	6	6	14	8	38	30	10
Red-breasted Nuthatch	12	3	20	6	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Brown Creeper																					
Winter Wren																					
Carolina Wren																					
Cathartid																					
Brown Thrasher																					
Robin																					
Bluebird																					
Golden-crowned Kinglet																					
Cedar Waxwing																					
Northern Shrike																					
Migrant Shrike																					
Starling																					
English Sparrow																					
Meadowlark																					
Western Meadowlark																					
Red-winged Blackbird																					
Rosy Blackbird																					
Bronzed Grackle																					
Cowbird																					
Cardinal																					
Purple Finch																					
Redpoll																					
Pine Siskin																					
Goldfinch																					
Red Crossbill																					
Red-eyed Towhee																					
Arctic Towhee																					
Savannah Sparrow																					
Slate-colored Junco																					
Tree Sparrow																					
Harris's Sparrow																					
White-crowned Sparrow																					
White-throated Sparrow																					
Swamp Sparrow																					
Song Sparrow																					
Laudian Longspur																					
Snow Bunting																					
Number of Species	20	30	29	72	47	24	20	19	20	16	40	24	28	27	18	28	29	31	26	25	
Number of Observers	3	37	27	41	25	6	2	4	1	2	14	8	3	1	1	6	18	4	3		
Total Iowa list																					

\* See data under station in body of article. . . . . 90 species.

10. GRUNDY CENTER (car trip from Grundy Center to Pine Lake at Eldora and return; roadsides and wooded section at Pine Lake). Dec. 31; 8 to 11:30 a. m. Clear; temp.  $25^{\circ}$ ; almost no wind;  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile on foot,  $40\frac{1}{2}$  miles by car. Mrs. Eldon Hasbrouck, Mrs. Harold B. Brown.

The same trip was taken by Mrs. J. Ray King, Miss LaVerne Jontz, and Mrs. Harold Brown on January 2, and these additional birds were seen: Sparrow Hawk, 1; Goldfinch, 3; Song Sparrow, 2.

11. HARPERS FERRY ( $7\frac{1}{2}$ -mile radius centering on S $\frac{1}{4}$  corner Sec. 15-96-3, from McGregor to U. S. Govt. Lock & Dam No. 9, including parts of Bloody Run Creek, Yellow River, and Mississippi River bottoms; deciduous timber 30%, coniferous timber 5%, bottom lands with weeds and brush 20%, open fields and roads 45%). Dec. 26; 8 a. m. to 3:30 p. m. Partly cloudy to dark cloudy; temp.  $28^{\circ}$  to  $34^{\circ}$ ; wind S-SE, 1-3 m.p.h.; 2 in. old crushed snow on ground, this covered with 4 in. loose snow; total hours,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  on foot, 5 by car; total miles, 5 on foot, 30 by car. Observers together. A. J. Palas, F. R. Palas.

12. IOWA CITY (City Park and river bottoms near by, Lake Macbride State Park, Swan Lake marsh; open farm lands 45%, deciduous woodland 45%, coniferous woodland 10%). Dec. 31; 7 a. m. to 5 p. m. Clear; temp.  $16^{\circ}$  to  $40^{\circ}$ ; wind W, 2-5 m.p.h.; ground bare; all ponds and river entirely frozen; total party-hours, 18 on foot, 11 by car; total party-miles, 12 on foot, 78 by car. Observers (14) in four parties. Lang Baily, Lewis Blevins, Shirley Briggs, J. H. Decker, Clark Ehlers, Fred Kent, Dr. and Mrs. P. P. Laude, Ed Lewis, Jim Lewis, Thomas Morrissey, Max Pepernik, Peter Petersen, Jr., JoAnn Shriner.

13. LAMONI (radius of 9 miles, from Lamoni to Terra Haute Woods to Nine Eagles State Park). Dec. 28; 8:30 a. m. to 4:30 p. m. Overcast most of the day, sunny at noon; temp.  $40^{\circ}$  at start,  $54^{\circ}$  at noon,  $46^{\circ}$  at return; 52 miles by car. Mrs. W. C. DeLong and seven members of ornithology class of Lamoni Adult School.

Thousands of Mallards were wintering on Nine Eagles Lake, and the numbers were estimated as accurately as possible. Mrs. DeLong was very close to Buffle-head and watched it for some time.

14. MOUNT VERNON (12-mile circle around city, including Muskrat Slough, Ivanhoe, Dark Hollow in Palisades-Keppler State Park). Dec. 26; 7:30 a. m. to 12:45, 1:30 to 4:15 p. m. Partly cloudy; temp.  $30^{\circ}$ - $36^{\circ}$ ; wind E, 5-10 m.p.h.; ground bare; main channel of Cedar River open; total hours,  $6\frac{1}{2}$  on foot,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  by car; total party-miles, 8 on foot, 38 by car. Observers together. J. Harold Ennis, J. David Ennis, Richard Miner.

The Carolina Wrens and lone Rusty Blackbird were well observed with 7x50 binoculars. The Meadowlark and Red-wing flocks were very conservatively estimated.

15. OTTUMWA (and vicinity, also eastern part of Wapello County). Dec. 26; 8:30 to 11:30 a. m., 1:30 to 5:30 p. m. Clear to partly cloudy; temp.  $36^{\circ}$ - $42^{\circ}$ ; wind E, 10 m.p.h.; 6 miles on foot, 70 by car. Mrs. Orville T. Upp.

16. PINE HOLLOW STATE PARK (Dubuque County). Dec. 24; 7:30 a. m. to 12:30 p. m. Clear; wind N, 1-4 m.p.h.; 5 in. old snow in the woods;  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles on foot, 30 by car, including trip from Farley to the park and return. George E. Crossley.

Species not seen within the park boundaries: Red-tailed Hawk, Ring-necked Pheasant, Starling, English Sparrow.

17. SHENANDOAH (and vicinity, 5-mile radius; Riverton, 5-mile radius; Waubonsie State Park; open woods and bordering fields 30%, open farm land and prairie 60%, river woods 10%). Dec. 26; 8:45 a. m. to 5 p. m. Clear; temp.  $24^{\circ}$  at start,  $43^{\circ}$  at return; wind NE changing to S-SE, 5-10 m.p.h.; 10 miles on foot, 122 miles by car. Observers (6) in three parties.



THE CENSUS-TAKERS MIGHT EASILY HAVE MISSED THIS ONE  
(F. W. Kent photo)

Mrs. Robert Bordner, Mrs. Francis M. Braley, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. H. Collins, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Vaughn.

18. SIOUX CITY (War Eagle's Monument Park Woods, confluence area of Missouri and Big Sioux rivers, Lower Riverside Woods, Stone Park, Plum Creek area, Logan Park and Graceland Cemetery, Brown's Lake and woods, Morningside Nurseries area; hilly woodland and park 40%, wooded streams 15%, coniferous cemeteries 10%, open fields and marshes 25%, city and suburban areas 10%). Jan. 1; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Dark and cloudy; temp. 28° to 34°; wind NW, 8 m.p.h.; patches of snow and ice in protected areas; lakes and streams frozen. Big Sioux River open from power plant to lower Riverside Park; total miles, 12 on foot, 143 by car. Observers (18) in seven parties. Eunice Barrett, Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Barrett, Mr. and Mrs. Darrell Hanna, Carl Kuhlmann, Mr. and Mrs. John Lueshen, Mr. and Mrs. George Marsh, L. J. Nicholson, Robert Nickolson, Mr. and Mrs. LeRoy Nydegger, Allan Schatz, Dr. and Mrs. J. L. Schott, Gertrude Weaver.

19. SWEET MARSH (near Tripoli, woods along Wapsipinicon River and Crane Creek; farm land of northern Black Hawk County and southern Bremer County). Dec. 31; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Clear; temp. 10° to 35°; wind W-NW, 0-20 m.p.h.; ground bare except for small, scattered snow patches in protected areas; ponds and streams frozen except for small area of running water in Plum Creek at Sweet Marsh; 6½ miles on foot, 62 miles by car. Myrle M. Burk, Martin L. Grant, Russell Hays, Jack Heifner.

20. WEBSTER CITY (7½-mile radius centering on Des Moines and 2nd sts., including Graceland Cemetery, Briggs Woods, areas along Boone River south of city, and roadsides; deciduous woodland 50%, open farm land and fields 35%, mixed woods 10%, residential areas 5%). Dec. 27; 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Cloudy; temp. 27° to 37°; wind SE, 10-15 m.p.h.; ground bare in open areas but up to 3 in. crusted snow in sheltered places; river open in city but about 90% frozen elsewhere; total hours, 6 on foot, 3 by car; total

miles, 7 on foot, 52 by car. Observers together. Dennis L. Carter, Donald P. Johnson, Heber P. Johnson.

Carolina Wren was seen in a brushy area along the Boone River south of the city on Dec. 23 and again on day of census; it was observed at close range and its call notes were heard. Arctic Towhee, a male, was seen in vicinity of Beaver Bridge about 6 miles south of city. It was watched at close range for five minutes; white spots on the wings and back were noted, and its call notes were heard.

21. WOODWARD (Timber land, weedy fence rows, wooded area along Des Moines River). Dec. 24; 12 noon to 3:30 p. m. Temp. 42° to 36°; light W wind; 5 miles on foot, 2 by car. Richard A. Guthrie.

Brown Thrasher was watched for five minutes at a distance of 15 feet. It was in fairly heavy timber and brush along a draw. It looked slick and seemed to be in very good condition.

#### ADDITIONAL BIRD NOTES WHICH ACCOMPANIED THE CENSUSES

Davenport.—Elton Fawks reported large flocks of blackbirds wintering in the Barstow area for the past three years. They roosted in tall grass of marsh areas near Barstow, Silvis, and East Moline, Illinois. He counted up to 500 Grackles until just before Christmas, 1955. After that the numbers dropped considerably. Red-wings remained until mid-January in numbers well over 500. Roosting with the Red-wings and Grackles were large numbers of Starlings and English Sparrows, and several times he had noted Cowbirds, before and after the Christmas census. Robins wintered in the Davenport area in large numbers, daily reports in late December and early January varying from 50 birds to several hundred; they found good feeding in apple orchards.

Dubuque.—A flock of about 75 Robins seen in the area on Dec. 24.

Iowa City.—Fred Kent reported a Migrant Shrike seen on Dec. 30, and a Northern Shrike on Jan. 1—neither seen on Dec. 31, the day of the census.

Mount Vernon.—Seen in area Dec. 31: Barred Owl, 1; Winter Wren, 1; Goldfinch, 5.

Webster City.—Other birds seen during the census period were: Dec. 20, Lapland Longspur, 45; Dec. 22, Bob-white, 13, and Cedar Waxwing, 7; Dec. 23, Belted Kingfisher, 1; Jan. 1, Red-winged Blackbird, 6. Five Tufted Titmice and two Winter Wrens were also seen during the census period but not on the day the census was taken. Carter and Heber Johnson saw a shrike near the Boone River south of the city on Dec. 23, but did not identify it positively. It was seen again in the same area on Dec. 31 and a study was made under excellent conditions; it was an immature Northern Shrike—light brown breast barred with darker brown and other field marks were noted.

Woodward.—Guthrie reported a Long-eared Owl there in the fall, the first one he had ever seen in the region. A pet Tufted Titmouse which he had fed for three winters did not put in an appearance in the past winter. The bird would come and eat nut meats from his hand. He saw Redpolls in several large flocks during December.

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#### GENERAL NOTES

**Bird Census at a Dooryard Feeding Station.**—January 2, 1956. Red-bellied Woodpecker, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 3; Downy Woodpecker, 5; Blue Jay, 6; Chickadee, 6; Tufted Titmouse, 3; White-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Robin, 1 (a daily visitor most of the winter); Starling, 25; English Sparrow, 20; Bronzed Grackle, 1 (a daily visitor most of the winter); Cardinal, 2; Slate-colored Junco, 4. Total, 13 species. On the day before we had a Brown Creeper and a Shrike.—MRS. WALTER PIKE, Coggon, Iowa.

**Winter Record of Mockingbird at Waterloo.**—On January 18, 1956, Dr. C. W. Robertson called me to say he had seen a Mockingbird near Byrnes Park in Waterloo. We hastened to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jackson Wenner, where we met Mr. and Mrs. Barlow who had also seen the bird. Without trouble we saw the long-tailed, gray bird with white wing bars near a piece of suet on a tree. We watched it as it flew about the yard. Mrs. Wenner said the Mockingbird had come to the back porch for some crumbs she had scattered. The bird had been around for some time, she said, but they did not identify it until a man working near by who was from the South told them it was a Mockingbird.—RUSSELL M. HAYS, Waterloo, Iowa.

**Winter Record of the Virginia Rail in Polk County.**—Shortly before the Christmas census in 1954, a Virginia Rail was found by Miss Mary Ellen Warters in her driveway. The bird was brought into the house but did not survive. On January 30, 1955, my wife and I discovered a Virginia Rail in a spring-fed marshy area at Camp Dodge. This Rail seemed uninjured and fed and moved about in normal fashion. It was observed on several other occasions until February 27, at least. Some of the water in the area remained open all winter although the temperature during the stay of the Rail ranged as low as 12 below zero. There was as much as 9 inches of snow on the ground during the same period. Dr. Peasley secured a good colored movie of this bird as a record.—WOODWARD H. BROWN, Des Moines, Iowa.

**Winter Birds at Wheatland.**—Although we did not take a Christmas census according to rules, Dolly and I spent a total of nine hours out-of-doors on four different dates, December 24, 25, 26, 31, 1955, walking about 10 miles through woods and meadows near Wheatland. We observed the 29 species on this list: Golden-eye Duck, Sharp-shinned, Red-tailed, Red-shouldered and Rough-legged Hawks, Ring-necked Pheasant, Barred Owl, Belted Kingfisher (4), Flicker, Red-bellied, Red-headed, Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, Prairie Horned Lark, Blue Jay, Crow, Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Robin (6), Starling, English Sparrow, Meadowlark (6), Red-winged Blackbird (23), Cardinal, Purple Finch, Goldfinch, Tree Sparrow, Song Sparrow. On November 26, 1955, a brightly-colored Dickcissel fed in a patch of millet among a flock of Tree Sparrows.—C. ESTHER COPP, Wheatland, Iowa.

**Fall Bird Notes.**—On a trip up the Mississippi River on September 7, 1955, we observed 12 American Egrets, 15 Great Blue Herons, and about 300 Tree Swallows (during a stay in Minneapolis a few days later we read that Tree Swallows were gone from that area). The Egrets were seen north of Lansing, Iowa, and were scattered; three birds were in one group and the others were singles.

We went on to Duluth, Minnesota, where I joined the Bird Club and watched the "Hawk Flight" again. Although not as famous as Hawk Mountain in Pennsylvania, the Duluth hawk-flight area is gaining in popularity each year. The first day we watched, the flight was a little disappointing, but we saw many Sharp-shins, some Cooper's, two Goshawks, one Bald Eagle, two Turkey Vultures, and two Ospreys. On the second day approximately 880 hawks were recorded. There were a great many Sharp-shins, 10 Sparrow Hawks, two Pigeon Hawks, one Raven seen by Dr. Hofslund, one Bald Eagle, two Turkey Vultures, six Cooper's Hawks, three Goshawks, 12 Marsh Hawks, two Red-tails, 300 Broad-wings, and two Ospreys. The hawks were not as cooperative as they were two years ago when I visited the place. Many went far to our left or far out over the lake in very high, swirling flocks. These were mostly Broad-wings, but there were many that



WATCHING THE HAWK FLIGHT ON THE HILLS OVERLOOKING  
DULUTH, MINNESOTA

Second man from left is Dr. Pershing Hofslund of the University of Minnesota branch school at Duluth. Third from left is Russell Hays.

were unidentified. Those that gave us the best views were the ones that came right over us and others that went down the valley just below our lookout point. In the latter group were many Sharp-shins.

The hawk flight at Duluth is drawing a good many observers. I counted 11 cars which had brought visitors on one road. There were nearly a dozen youngsters in our group, and all were very much interested. Two Sharp-shins and one Osprey were found shot. A few hawks are picked off by gunners, but conditions are improving in this respect.

I made an interesting hawk observation here at Waterloo on the evening of October 3, 1955. A Sharp-shinned Hawk flew over accompanied by a large flock of Chimney Swifts, several of which would peel off and dart rapidly at the hawk while the remainder moved along overhead in the direction taken by the Sharp-shin.—RUSSELL M. HAYS, 825 Franklin St., Waterloo, Iowa.

**Summer Tanager in Des Moines.**—In the spring of 1955, a resident of Foster Drive (which runs immediately east of Greenwood and Ashworth parks in Des Moines) notified Joe Kennedy, a neighbor and local junior Audubon member, of the presence in the neighborhood of an unusual bird which, he said, had arrived in April. On June 6, Joe located the bird and identified it as a Summer Tanager male. On June 7, the female was identified. The male was seen repeatedly in the neighborhood and twice in Greenwood Park with the exception of a six-week period in mid-summer, part of which time Joe was out of the city. The female was seen again only on June 23, and September 22. The male, at least, was seen on several occasions by several local birders. The persistent calling and bright plumage of the male were doubtless responsible for the more frequent observations of the male.

As there is no known record of the Summer Tanager in Polk County for the past 50 years, we had hope that a nesting record could be established; however, we were unable to locate the nest or even to observe either of the pair in the act of carrying food.—WOODWARD H. BROWN, Des Moines, Iowa.

**Winter Bird List from Tama.**—The following list of birds was obtained on two drives on December 24 and 26, 1955 (southeast and northwest of Tama, about 6 hours in the field, temp. about 26°). Those marked with asterisk were seen at feeding station or in elm trees at home. Sparrow Hawk, 3; Red-bellied Woodpecker\*, 2; Hairy Woodpecker\*, 3; Downy Woodpecker\*, 2; Blue Jay\*, 2; Chickadee\*, 3; Tufted Titmouse\*, 3; White-breasted Nuthatch\*, 4; Brown Creeper\*. 2; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 2; Starling\*. 3; Migrant Shrike, 4; English Sparrow\*, 10; Meadowlark, 5; Cardinal\*, 2; Slate-colored Junco, 10; Fox Sparrow, 3; Song Sparrow, 3.—MRS. W. G. MacMARTIN, Tama, Iowa.

**Banding Ducks in South Dakota.**—Plans to report on my work in banding ducks for the South Dakota Fish and Game Dept. in the summer of 1955 were delayed until I had information on the exact number of ducks that we banded. The tabulation is now complete. We banded a total of 3,009 ducks, including 482 Mallards, 223 Pintails, 17 Gadwalls, 21 Shovellers, 7 Redheads, 9 Baldpates, 1 Ruddy Duck, 1 Wood Duck, and 2,248 Blue-winged Teal. Our crew (the crew at the Madison refuge) was composed of four members including a crew leader. We banded most of our ducks within 50 miles of Madison, although we also made two short trips to the Lake Andes area.

We banded a little over 1,000 of our ducks at Lake Henry in Kingsbury County where an unusual number of ducks had concentrated due to the drying up of surrounding water areas. We caught all these ducks by the drive-trapping method. On smaller areas we frequently ran down ducks with nets in addition to drive trapping. Of course, most of the ducks we banded were young birds unable to fly. Females would sometimes follow their broods into the traps, and late in the season we caught some molting adults.

Two other crews were banding in South Dakota in the summer of 1955, and they banded a total of 3,117 ducks. While in South Dakota, I added Eared Grebe, Western Grebe, Cinnamon Teal, Marbled Godwit, Avocet, Northern Phalarope, and Burrowing Owl to my life list of birds.—DENNIS CARTER, Webster City, Iowa.

**The Fall Meeting at Webster City.**—The fall meeting was held in Kendall Young Park, Webster City, on Sunday, September 18, 1955. The invitation to meet there was given by Dennis Carter, who with several friends planned the event. There was a fine picnic luncheon in the park at noon, with visiting with old friends as the central feature. A few items of business were acted upon. Albert Berkowitz, in behalf of Pres. Bruce Stiles, introduced a motion that the Union go on record as opposing the flash-bombing to be carried on by the air force near the Aransas Refuge. The motion was carried. There was a short discussion on means of getting rid of large concentrations of Starlings in towns. Dennis Carter led a field trip in the park, but it was a very warm, windy day and the bird list was small. Some of those attending the picnic stopped at the lakes near Jewell where birding had been very good.

The attendance register follows. AMES, Dr. and Mrs. Geo. Hendrickson, Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Johnson; CEDAR RAPIDS, Dorothy Brunner, Lavina Dragoo, Lillian Serbousek, Pauline Wershofen, Myra Willis; COGGON, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Pike; DAYTON, Chas. H. Conklin, Clarence Peel; DAVENPORT, Peter Petersen, Jr.; DES MOINES, Albert Berkowitz, Mr. and Mrs. Woodward Brown; ESTHERVILLE, Mr. and Mrs. M. L. Jones, Loren Jones; GRUNDY CENTER, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Brown; MOUNT VERNON, Rodger Brush, Dr. J. Harold Ennis, Mrs. Bessie Scobey; OTTUMWA, Mr. and Mrs. M. E. Stempel; WEBSTER CITY, Dennis L. Carter, Dr. and Mrs. M. H. Carter, Neal Carter, Donald Johnson, Heber Johnson. Total, 33.

**RING-NECKED PHEASANT SITTING ON A BED**

The bird in this unusual situation flew through the screen of a second-story sleeping porch at an Independence, Iowa, home, September 23, 1955. It was only slightly bruised, and after Maurice Stoneman took this photograph it jumped to the floor and crawled under the bed. Later it was caught and released at the edge of town. (Photograph by courtesy of "Bulletin-Journal," Independence).

**Blue Grosbeak in Polk County.**—I made a lucky find of the Blue Grosbeak on June 6, 1955, in the area immediately adjacent to the Des Moines Airport, when I was out driving with Mrs. Berkowitz and our older daughter. We had a perfect look at the male, and thought we caught a glimpse of the female. Subsequent to that date, many of us visited the area and many interested folks got to see these birds. Usually the male only was seen, but the female was also seen on several occasions. A nest was discovered and the female flushed from it; no eggs were laid in that nest, however. The male was seen and heard singing from the wires along the road, with considerable regularity, up until August 10. After that date the birds apparently deserted the area. Between June 6 and August 10, some of the people who also observed these birds were: Mr. and Mrs. Woodward H. Brown, Dr. and Mrs. Harold Peasley, Mrs. Joseph Chamberlain, Joe Kennedy, Mrs. Thomas Bond, Mrs. Dwight Brooke, Mr. and Mrs. Everett Griffith.—ALBERT C. BERKOWITZ, Des Moines, Iowa.

**Winter Birding on the Missouri River Bottoms.**—Lewis and Clark buried their comrade, Sergeant Floyd, on a high bluff near the mouth of a small river they named the Floyd River and then moved on to the Pacific Ocean. The Missouri River still skirts this great bluff as it did on that day about 150 years ago. At the foot of Sergeant Floyd's Bluff the alluvial flood plain makes its first appearance in Iowa and is only a few rods wide, then it broadens out to the width of a mile or more until just beyond the town of Sergeant Bluff. Here the hills suddenly recede and the great Missouri River Bottoms begin. The area extends for nearly 100 miles to Council Bluffs and varies in width, roughly, from 10 to nearly 20 miles.

It is a region that offers slightly different winter birding if one is inclined to spend most of a day driving at slow speeds on untraveled roads for

100 miles or more. Usually I plan to cut across the very tip of the rugged hills separating the Bottoms from the narrow Little Sioux River valley, for here at the hamlet of Grant Center one can always find numerous Red-bellied Woodpeckers and some resident Red-tailed Hawks.

Such a trip was made on December 23, 1955, on a day of mild, 45-degree temperature, with only a trace of snow on the ground. The first bird seen was an eagle, probably a Golden Eagle, which swung out from the towering bluff as we approached the Luton road where it turns off from Highway 141. Birds do not come easily on the Bottoms and often one drives for miles without seeing anything, as the area is a vast system of drainage ditches, with nearly every roadside ditch acting as a lateral ditch. Vast winter-wheat fields stretch away for a mile, and often occupied farm buildings are two or three miles apart. But we kept a sharp lookout, for as we watched a Rough-legged Hawk hovering patiently over a certain spot, what should pop from the very spot but a fine Short-eared Owl! Farther on we saw wintering Marsh Hawks beating over the fields. Usually they are male birds at this season. A Pigeon Hawk seated on a tall corn stalk in a field puzzled us until we got our glasses on it. Then it flew obligingly near the car and on into the town of Hornick.

We had driven nearly 40 miles before we heard the first familiar chirp of Lapland Longspurs; then we saw a flock of about ten. We were traveling our usual route out of Owego, when on sudden impulse we decided to turn and go a mile east and then drop south again. This was the best move of the day because this new route brought us suddenly into hundreds of busy Lapland Longspurs, and a short way down the road we saw a flock of about 30 colorful Redpolls; a short distance beyond was another flock of about ten. The Redpolls' sole food at the moment seemed to be wild sunflower seed. The ditch banks were very weedy and a natural haven for Tree Sparrows, Juncos, and Harris's Sparrows. Our little side trip over the hump to Grant Center paid off too, for we found about a dozen species of common winter birds as we walked through the timber, in addition to flushing a Barred Owl and watching some slick looking Robins feeding on the fruit of huckleberry trees.—WM. YOUNGWORTH, Sioux City, Iowa.

(This could have been made into a Christmas census list, but Youngworth preferred to put it into narrative form, in a nicely painted word picture, for which we are duly grateful.—Ed.)

**Winter Notes from Iowa City.**—During the late fall and winter of 1955-56, Shrikes were recorded on October 13, November 12, December 11, 23, 24, 27, 28, 30, January 1, 7, 22 (or 11 times between October 13 and January 22) along a 3-mile stretch of country road. Interested in the problem of the overlapping in winter of the Northern and Migrant Shrikes, special attention was given to observing the different birds. In several cases it was possible to check at close range (even photograph them), so satisfactory identification was made of the Migrant Shrike on December 11 and 27, and of the Gray or Northern Shrike on January 1 and 7. So few Gray Shrikes are seen in a season here their behavior patterns are not familiar enough to use as a clue for identification. A very fine article by Dale A. Zimmerman on "Field Identification and Comparative Behavior of Shrikes in Winter" appeared in the September, 1955, issue of Wilson Bulletin.

Of the wintering owls, the first Saw-whet was seen on November 3, the Short-eared on November 14, and the Long-eared on November 26. The Short-eared Owl has usually been an erratic and not-too-frequent item on our lists, but this year it was quite regular on our weekly census. We think we have a good clue to finding them and that is to look for them just at dusk. The area which rarely discloses them in daytime almost always produces them at sunset. Once we saw eight in two miles when nearly too



NORTHERN SHRIKE  
Photographed January 1, 1956, by F. W. Kent.



"OF THE WINTERING OWLS, THE FIEST SAW-WHET WAS SEEN ON  
NOVEMBER 3 . . . "

dark to see. At another time our trip through this area in mid-afternoon drew a blank, but three appeared at dusk. Perhaps there were more wintering here during the past winter and we found the roost area; at least we felt it was better to look when almost dark. This was frustrating for taking pictures when in other years we found them in daylight sitting on posts.

Our six species of owls with 28 individuals on the Christmas count quite pleased our group, as did our list of 40 species of birds without any water or shore-birds, and in a season that had not promised too many. A change of bird population occurred in mid-January with an influx of Meadowlarks, Mourning Doves, and Robins. Robins in singles were found at almost every farm windbreak, and an orchard south of town had a population up to 1,000. Longspurs were seen on November 12 but not again until January 21. Red-polls appeared early in December and again on January 31 and February 5. On February 4 it seemed a bit unreal to watch a Mockingbird for ten minutes. It was too close to use the binoculars as it worked along a fence-row on an abandoned farm.

On January 31 Howard Cleaves stopped at Iowa City, enroute on his Screen Tour lectures. We took a quick trip to find a Saw-whet Owl which accomodatingly sat and returned our stares from a distance of 3 feet. Mr. Cleaves showed me two old magazines he had with him in which he had the lead articles, with pictures, on birds. They were Bird-Lore of 1910 and National Geographic of 1914, with remarkable pictures, especially for those days of the old, dry-plate cameras.—FRED W. KENT, Iowa City, Iowa.



"AND THE LONG-EARED ON NOVEMBER 26."  
(F. W. Kent photos)

## NECROLOGY

**Mrs. Mary L. Bailey**, a charter member of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union, died at Sioux City, Iowa, December 14, 1955. Mrs. Bailey was Secretary of the Union from its beginning in 1923 until 1925, then served again in the period 1929-31. In the early days of the Union, when the only contact with members was through quarterly mimeographed letters, she wrote seven letters in the series.

Mrs. Bailey was born July 29, 1861, in a little brown house at Fifth and Douglas streets, Sioux City, on the present site of the Sioux City "Journal." She lived in the city of her birth the entire span of more than 94 years, surely a record that has been duplicated by few persons. Her parents were

Mr. and Mrs. S. T. Davis. Her father was a pioneer attorney who came to Sioux City in 1856, and was said to have had a part in promoting most of the early railroads in that part of the country. Her marriage to Henry M. Bailey took place on June 21, 1888. Mr. Bailey was a graduate of Yale and a prominent Sioux City banker; he died in 1924. The couple had four children: three sons, George D. of Detroit, Fred of Davenport, and another who died in 1936; one daughter, Mrs. G. W. Iseminger, of Richland, Wash.

Mrs. Bailey was a bird lover almost her entire life. Her interest began at the age of five when she and her father began taking trips to the woods. She held active membership in many organizations including Sioux City Bird Club of which she was president for a time, Sioux City Boat Club, Mystic Club, National Audubon Society, Wilson Ornithological Club, and D.A.R. She was also a member of the Presby-



MRS. MARY BAILEY

terian Church for 80 years. At the age of 59 she enrolled in the summer session of Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y., for the ornithology course under Dr. Arthur A. Allen. She enjoyed it so much she returned to Cornell the next three summers.

In an interview with a Sioux City newspaper reporter, Mrs. Bailey said: "The biggest thrill of my life came when I was 70 years old. I went to Europe alone and stayed 20 months. I had a wonderful time." In this interview, printed in 1951, she told of an experience in England when she came near to getting horsewhipped for unknowingly trespassing on forbidden property while looking for birds. Some English gentlemen came to her rescue. At another time she crawled under a fence in pursuit of a bird, when the owner came upon her and demanded an explanation. An enjoyable conversation followed and at the conclusion he escorted her to the gate and told her: "You won't have to crawl back under the fence." When President Roosevelt declared the bank holiday in 1933, she found herself marooned in Italy, unable to cash American checks—a situation that lasted only a short time, however.

Mrs. Bailey attended most of the meetings of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union for many years, until advanced age allowed only an occasional one. She attended the Sioux City meeting in 1948 and the Davenport meeting in

1950 was her last one. She maintained her own home and cooked her meals through most of her lifetime, but finally had to give up this independent life in her declining years. The last letter received from Mrs. Bailey by the Editor was dated January 9, 1952. She asked for a copy of Althea Sherman's book, "Birds of an Iowa Dooryard," and said, in part: "I knew Miss Sherman well and visited her several times in her home at National, Iowa, and I would like to own her book, knowing how well worth while it will be. I am, as perhaps you know, almost entirely blind, and can read only a few lines at a time with the aid of a powerful reading glass and my eye glasses, but I want to own a book of hers and later to give it to a friend who would like it."—F. J. P.

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#### MEMBERSHIP NEWS

It's pretty evident that bird study is getting more publicity and people are becoming more bird-conscious. Proof of this was a full page devoted to winter birds and how to feed them in the Des Moines Sunday Register of December 11. There were nine photos on one page and the written story was carried over onto a following page. The pictures included fine likenesses of Mrs. Dennis Warters and Mrs. Toni Wendelburg. Others showed Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Cardinal, Chickadee, and Blue Jay at various feeders. In the article Mrs. Warters, Mrs. Wendelburg, Albert Berkowitz, Mrs. Harold Peasley, Mrs. Dwight Brooke and Woodward Brown were either quoted on their methods of bird-feeding or their favorite feeders were pictured.

Time has flown for the Editor and it is hard for him to realize that a period of nearly six months has elapsed since he last worked on an issue of Iowa Bird Life. The December issue came out, of course, but his part in the preparation was very minor, Woodward Brown having assumed the very big and tedious job of compiling the five-year index. The Editor has prepared four of these indices during a period of 20 years of the magazine, and no one understands better than he the great amount of work that must go into an index. He as well as all members of our organization owes a big debt of gratitude to Mr. Brown for his painstaking and accurate job of preparing the index printed in our last issue.

The Editor's winter was an especially busy one. His work for the Iowa Conservation Commission took him about 3,500 miles during January and February. Due to a very dry summer and fall in 1955, Iowa streams went into the winter at an unusually low stage. Severe and protracted cold put ice in the streams to an extreme depth, with the result that heavy fish populations were crowded into remaining pools and oxygen supplies were soon exhausted. There were fish kills in some areas. Water samples were taken and oxygen tests were run at regular intervals on the Iowa, Cedar, Shellrock, Wapsipinicon, Maquoketa, Turkey, and West Fork rivers in these counties: Allamakee, Benton, Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Chickasaw, Clayton, Delaware, Fayette, Floyd, Hardin, Johnson, Linn, Marshall, Mitchell, Tama. Traveling over eastern Iowa in this work offered fine opportunities for observing winter bird life. The numbers of wintering Meadowlarks in nearly every county were surprising. Small flocks of from three to ten birds, and singles, would fly up from feeding places on the highway shoulders. Sparrow Hawks also seemed to be wintering in fair numbers, as were Red-tailed, Cooper's, and Rough-legged Hawks. Small numbers of Mourning Doves were seen. More of the above-mentioned species seemed to be here in this past severe winter than we usually find in an open, mild winter.

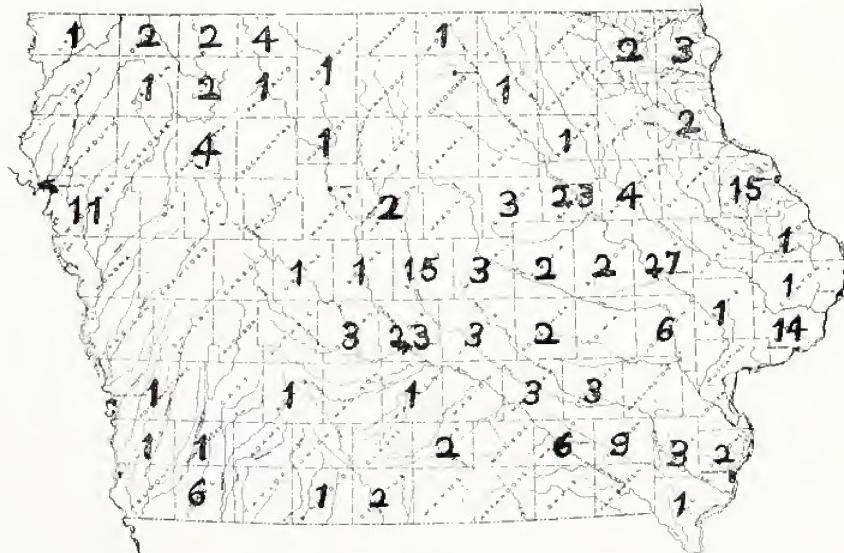
It's a rare day when the Editor receives praise for his work or compliments on the magazine. He was therefore surprised and pleased when a

number of persons wrote to him about the last September issue. This was without doubt one of our better issues, and some of the credit belongs to Fred Kent who furnished most of the fine illustrations which accompanied the equally fine bird articles. Fred is unusually generous in letting us use his photographs. More samples of his work appear in the present issue. Very nice notes of appreciation were received from Mrs. Phil Thornton of Storm Lake, Mrs. Walter Barrett of Sioux City, and Mrs. Toni Wendelburg of Des Moines.

Momies.

As part of an adult school held at the Lamoni, Iowa, high school on Tuesday evenings in the fall of 1955, Mrs. W. C. DeLong, one of our members, conducted a course in ornithology. Seven persons took the course and a good deal of interest was aroused. On Saturdays following the evening classes the group went on bird hikes. The course was divided into three parts: 1) Emphasis given to winter birds of the region, foods to attract them to window-feeders, and kinds of feeding stations; 2) Study of nesting birds of Iowa, types of bird territories, significance of bird songs and calls, and different types of nests; 3) Study of the migrating birds of the vicinity, the importance of keeping records explained, and special study of such migrants as sparrows, warblers, and thrushes.

The below map could well be a story without words. It shows the status and distribution of our membership in Iowa by counties as of February 1. The number of members (or lack of them) in each county is marked. It is worth studying and should furnish food for a little sober thought. We live in a large, well-populated state in which bird lovers exist by hundreds, yes thousands. Our membership could be increased three or four times if our members would make the necessary effort and invite their friends to join us. We need a good, strong, well-organized membership committee patterned along the lines of various other organizations who go out and recruit new members in vigorous campaigns. We would like to print this map each year, and be able to show a healthy gain over the state with members in every county instead of the numerous blanks that are now painfully evident.



IOWA ORNITH. UNION MEMBERS IN IOWA BY COUNTIES